exclusively in the rural areas including about 700 locations at block/tehsil/mandal level identified in the Marketing Plan 1999-2000. Out of these 1,247 locations, OMCs Plan to set up 60 LPG distributorships in the State of Gujarat. The selection of distributorship is a continuous process and it is not possible to indicate a time frame by which these agencies are likely to be commissioned.

ONGC's investments in oil production

†1608. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact the pace of growth in the field of oil production by the ONGC has gone down during the last one decade;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether ONGC has formulated a plan to make large scale investments in the coming years to stop constant fall in the production of crude oil;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, what is Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Although in the early part of the last decade there was a decline in the crude oil production of ONGC, this was arrested and turn-around achieved through additional inputs in the major fields such as Mumbai High, Neelam, Heera and Gandhar.

The decline in the production was mainly beacasue of the following reasons:

* Major fields like Mumbai High on decline, which is a natural phenomenon of aging fields;
* No major discoveries in the last 10—12 years;
* Environmental problems, delay in acquisition of land, power shortage, etc in the North-eastern region.

†*Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.*

(c) and (d) To improve the recovery factor from the existing fields, ONGC has taken up its 15 fields for implementing Enhanced Oil Recovery (FOR)/Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes at an estimated investment of over Rs. 10,000 crore which would also help in accelerating oil production from these fields.

(e) Does not arise.

Imports after dismantling of APM

1609. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Administered Price Mechanism for petroleum products is scheduled to be dismantled by 1st April, 2002;

(b) if so, what would be the likely import thereafter; and

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to avoid price fluctuations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details are given in Statement. (*See* below).

(c) Details in this regard have not been finalized as yet.

Statement

The projected imports of crude oil and products during 2002-03

(Thousand Metric Tonnes)

CRUDE IMPORTS	95,159
PRODUCTS	
LPG	1,275
FO/LSHS	487
LOBS	369

Fluctuation in crude oil prices

1610. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether crude prices in international market soared with the terrorists